(b) whether Government are aware of the news about torture of a Hindu woman for 180 days in jail;

(c) whether Indian Embassy sends information regarding demolition of hundreds of temples;

(d) if so, the steps Government have taken regarding such information; and

(e) whether any human rights organization has asked/written to Government to take steps in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No.

(b) to (e) Government have seen reports about the case of Ms. M. Revathi/Siti Fatimah Abdul Karim. High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur has been reporting from time to time on instances of demolition of temples in Malaysia including cases where the temples have been situated on Government land or when their property papers were not in order. Government carefully monitor such developments, taking into account reports from various sources.

Report of Indian Delegation to Pakistan

†502. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient points of the report of the Indian delegation that went to Pakistan to inspect the Pakistani prisons there; and

(b) the measures Government are taking in light of that report ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No Indian delegation has inspected Pakistani prisons. However, during the visit of the External Affairs Minister to Pakistan in January, 2007, it was agreed that a Committee comprising retired judges of the Superior Judiciary would visit jails in the two countries and take steps to ensure humane treatment and expedite release of prisoners who have completed their prison terms.

Linking of Kigaje with Lhasa

503. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China is considering a proposal to link Kigaje with capital Lhasa by 280 Km. rail link by 2010; and

(b) if so, whether it would pose a security risk to India and if so, the steps being considered to address the situation?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Government have seen Chinese media reports stating that the Qinghai-Tibet railway is expected to be further extended from Lhasa to Xigaze. These reports also state that the construction of this 254-kilometres long rail section is expected to be completed by 2010.

(b) Government keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

Visa for persons from Pakistan

504. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons of Pakistan that have been granted visa to visit India during the last three years, profession-wise; and

(b) the number of Indians that have been given visa during last three years to visit Pakistan profession-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Visas are granted according to purpose of visit and not profession-wise. Total number of visas issued to Pakistani nationals by High Commission of India, Islamabad during the last three years is as follows:

2004 - 60230

2005 - 88990

2006 - 87512

Information about total number of visas issued to Pakistani nationals by other Indian Missions/Posts abroad during the last three years is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as available.

(b) Visas to Indians for visiting Pakistan are granted by the Missions/Posts of Pakistan located in India or abroad. Information on number of Indians visiting Pakistan is, therefore, not available with the Government.

New norms for passports

505. SHRI M.V.MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new norms fixed by Government for issuing passports to the Indians in the country;

(b) the minimum/maximum time-limit for issuing passports to the persons who have applied; and

(c) the steps that are being taken by Government to avoid queues at the regional passport offices in the country?